



PCC 605_905 INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Spring 2025 | Wednesday 1-4 PM (CST) | Online Synchronous 1-3

Instructor: Rev Esther Acolatse, Ph. D | Pronouns (she/her)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This Integrative Seminar course explores the nuanced understanding of pastoral theology and care as it has

been developed throughout Christian history. In this course, students who are pastoral practitioners will be asked to identify what is at stake in their specific pastoral context and reflect psychologically, socioculturally, ethically, and theologically. Psychological and other social scientific theories and insights will be drawn to understand and interpret concrete pastoral care situations. Students will critically examine their ethical-theological beliefs or assumptions that impact and challenge practices of care as they engage with individuals, families, or communities. While students will be introduced to a variety of contemporary pastoral theological works, they will be encouraged to develop their own pastoral theological perspectives and practical strategies that address and tackle contemporary issues faced by the church and the wider public square today. This course is designed primarily for students in the Master of Arts in Pastoral Care and Counseling and Ph.D. students in Pastoral Theology, Personality, and Culture. However, other degree students interested in pastoral/spiritual care in the parish, chaplaincy or other ministry settings may find the course beneficial.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the discipline and methods of pastoral theology as an integrative discipline particular the integration of psychological theories and theologies.
- 2) Articulate one's pastoral identity, theological beliefs/assumptions, and their implications for ministry.
- 3) Understand contemporary psychological, sociocultural, and structural factors that inform, shape, or challenge Christian living and pastoral leadership.
- 4) Demonstrate the ability to think critically and analytically on key pastoral theological works as well as reflect theologically in pastoral practices.
- 5) Develop one's own scholarly method and practical interests within the field of pastoral theology, care, and counseling.

CLASS STRUCTURE

This is a 13-week long, three-credit hybrid course. Students can think of this course's weekly teaching and learning in two parts:

1▪ Part One – online (Wednesday 1-3pm). The class will meet online for two hours weekly (with a short break). Class time together will involve a short lecture, class discussion, group presentation, and other group activities.

▪ Part Two – Asynchronous Learning. Students will be expected to engage in learning activities such as reading required materials, participating in online discussion forums, or doing independent research.

▪ Ph.D. Students Only – Monthly Writing Seminar. Ph.D. students in Pastoral Theology, Personality, and Culture will meet with the professor and peers monthly (3 or 4 times during the semester) in person or virtually. More information will be shared later.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Textbook:

1. Graham, Elaine, Heather Walton, and Francis Ward. *Theological Reflection: Methods*, 2nd Edition. London: SCM Press, 2019.

Book Review Textbooks:

1. Crumpton, Stephanie. *A Womanist Pastoral Theology Against Intimate and Cultural Violence*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. ISBN:
2. Rogers-Vaughn, Bruce. *Caring for Souls in a Neoliberal Age*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
3. Sharp, Melinda McGarrah. *Misunderstanding Stories: Toward a Postcolonial Pastoral Theology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013.
4. Swain, Storm. *Trauma and Transformation at Ground Zero: A Pastoral Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

Additional Textbooks:

The following books are available either in eBook or on course reserve. Because we will read only selections, you are not required to obtain your own copies.

1. Bidwell, Duane, and Joretta Marshall, ed. *The Formation of Pastoral Counselors: Challenges and Opportunities*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2006.
2. Couture, Pamela, and Rodney Hunter, ed. *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.
3. Dykstra, Robert, ed. *Images of Pastoral Care: Classic Readings*. St. Louis, MS: Chalice Press, 2005.
4. Miller-McLemore, Bonnie, and Brita Gill-Austern, ed. *Feminist & Womanist Pastoral Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
5. Ramsay, Nancy, ed. *Pastoral Care and Counseling: Redefining the Paradigms*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004.
6. Ramsay, Nancy, ed. *Pastoral Theology and Care: Critical Trajectories in Theory and Practice*. Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2018.
7. Woodward, James, and Stephen Pattison, ed. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

There will be a link to ebooks on the course site in Moodle.